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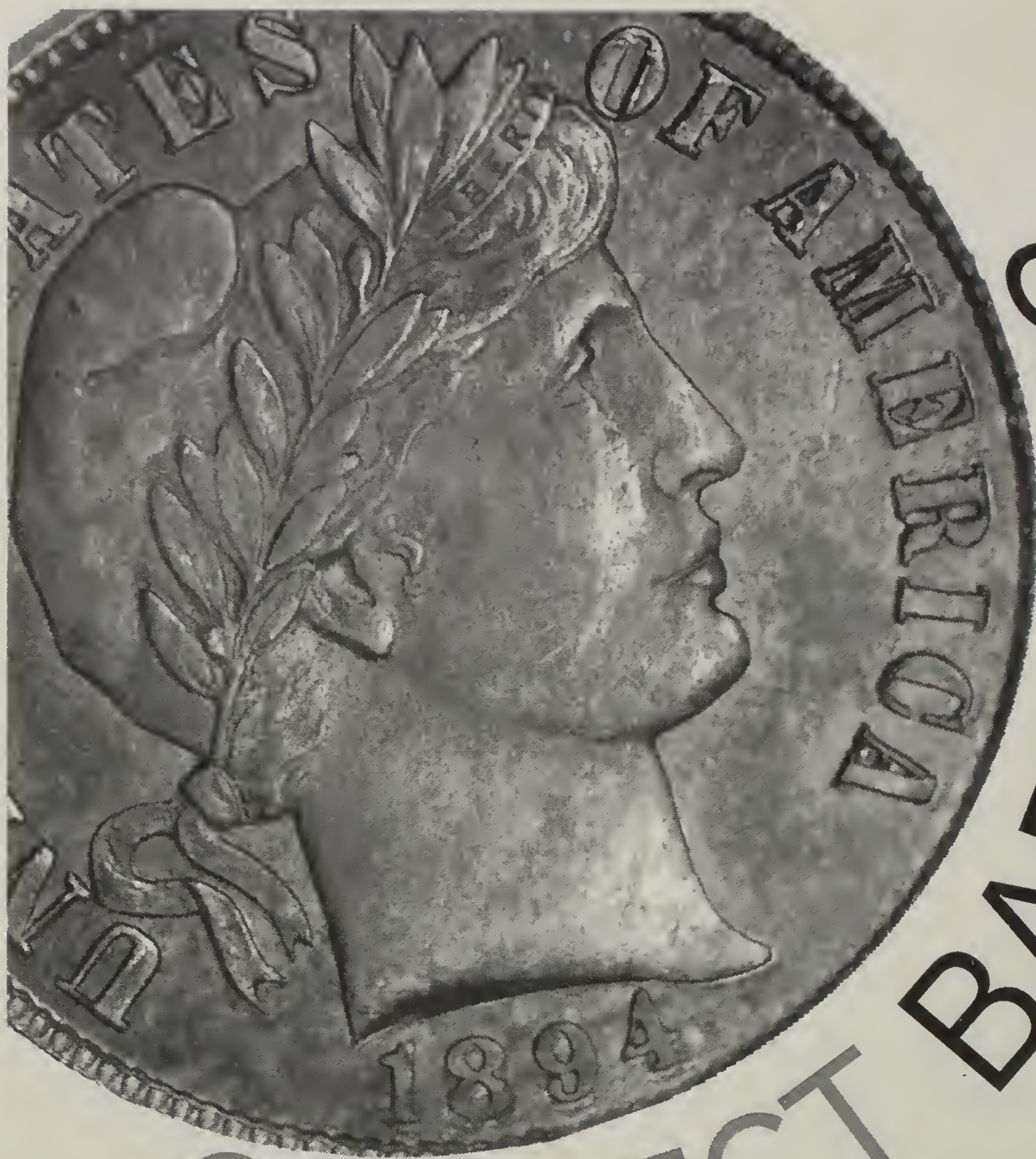
BCCS Annual Meeting at ANA



World's Fair of Money, Chicago, Aug. 14, 2013

See pages 15-17

Photo courtesy of John Frost and Tim Glaue



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JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

Founded in 1989 by Steve Epstein
ANA Club Member C-146266

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BCCS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I write this message on Labor Day weekend as my first task of the day.

I'm still shuffling through papers and purchases from the ANA "World's Fair of Money" which began just three weeks ago. The Barber meeting was held on Wednesday at 9 AM. John Frost provides a detailed account of the meeting on page 15 in this issue. Where was I???

An ANA show has many diversions for the collector. I usually highlight meetings I will attend, dealers I wish to visit, and auction sessions of interest. The Stack's Bowers auction offered an enormous quantity of diverse material (13,000 lots sold over a week in a dozen sessions). On Tuesday, I realized I had a conflict at 9 AM between the Barber meeting and the first auction session selling John J. Ford material. I first told John I couldn't run the meeting due to the auction, and he was ready to go! John emphasized the importance of my going to this session. I spoke to a fraction of individuals who were populating the meeting room and thanked John.

May I talk about the auction session? Ford's collection had been sold over a few years in twenty-one beautiful catalogs. I had assumed that was everything, but the ANA Show doesn't disappoint. Two additional catalogs were part of the official auction.

On Wednesday the session opened with Ford's Canadian colonial tokens offered in 176 lots. Opening bids were often low (a few hundred dollars) but were 'jumped' two or three thousand dollars by aggressive dealers, agents or collectors. Two tokens sold for over \$40,000! I bid from the floor on ten lots, quit bidding on eight of these, and bought two lots.

I realize I've used most of my message on non-Barber topics, but I hope these comments are interesting and serve the zeal most collectors know when someone excitedly shows off an ancient coin, a medal, or a new book to a fellow collector.

Numismatic regards,
Phil Carrigan

An Unusual Die Break on an 1892 Barber Quarter

By Michael S. Fey



1892 Reverse (Type II) Die Break Below "D" of "UNITED"

According to Feigenbaum (1999), the 1892 Philadelphia issue of the Barber Quarter is not particularly rare, ranking 66th by mintage in the Barber Quarter series. As a first year of issue, many coins were saved. The Mint was learning about its new design while it was striking coins. How long might the dies last? One thing we know for sure is that the Mint changed hubs for the reverse. Coins with the middle bar of the "E" of "UNITED" visible were designated as Type I and seemed to be twice as scarce as coins struck from the Type II reverse where the middle bar of the "E" is obscured.

I recently came across a raw Type II 1892 Barber Quarter in choice almost uncirculated condition with an unusual die break below the "D" of "UNITED" between the "D" and the scroll. Die breaks occur when chunks of metal fall out of a die with subsequently struck coins showing a blob of raised metal in the area where the hole in the die (the reverse image) occurred. If this occurs at the rim, we call it a cud.

In the Morgan Dollar series, we call these late die state die breaks and value them highly because they are rare. I don't know if this variety has been reported before, but you may want to take a look at your Barber coins. Tell other Barber collectors about them. Hidden gems like this make collecting more fun.

Barber Coin Collector Society

“Community” Value

By Tim Glaue

On August 1, 2012, I was given a new opportunity (at my day-to-day real job) to take on the responsibility of forming technical communities. There are two aspects to these communities taking on an utmost prominence and focus: people and knowledge. For people, we are interested in “individual competencies, skills, learning, fit, experiences, development and succession.” For knowledge, we think of the “immersive, knowledge-rich environment including accessible documentation, support infrastructure and/or delivery mechanisms” available for those people. The more I have studied the value-based aspects of people and knowledge, the more I think the same thing applies to the Barber Coin Collectors’ Society membership.

I attended my first Society meeting on August 14, 2013 at the ANA “World’s Fair of Money.” According to John Frost, this was the largest grouping of members we ever had for BCCS. Looking around the room, I could see an immeasurable wealth of knowledge and passion. For some reason, we get excited about Barber coins! After participating, I thought it would be good to write down what I saw as the real values within our “community.”

Value of Individual Competencies – It was exciting to hear about all of the experiences out of the ANA Summer Seminar in Colorado Springs, CO. Expanding learning opportunities (like in this seminar) - ranging from a Charles E. Barber historical study to the methods of grading both sides of a coin (and not just Liberty’s headband) – helps to increase knowledge and skill while firmly rooting individuals trying to form competent collections. Striving to achieve knowledge depth around Barber coins is a key sustaining element for enticing the younger generation while growing/establishing legacy. When BCCS sponsors and sends delegates to dispense, share and teach those who seek out available learning opportunities – this is a huge value.

Values of Development and Succession – If you were at the meeting August 14th, you would have heard about 3 younger individuals who participated in the Barber class at the ANA Summer Seminar. Development can happen with practitioner-collectors at all ages, but it is especially neat to see knowledge being infused into younger people. With the BCCS bringing along and guiding individuals who

hunger for more insight into Victorian-era coins, this will help sustain a longer-lasting community. Succession is important as well, identifying, then nurturing, those who will carry the torch into future generations contributing to a domino effect of inspiration for a new generation of Barber collectors.

Value of an Immersive, Knowledge-rich Environment – One of the things I like about the Society’s *Journal* is that members share what they know about Barber Halves, Quarters, Dimes and Liberty “V” Nickels. I can’t think of a better way to grow a community than collaboration and challenge for a greater knowledge depth of Barber coins. I think what I enjoyed most was the time we all spent afterwards sharing our passion, showing coins or recent purchases to each other, explaining the intricate details behind why we selected that specific coin and what we see in it as enticing and beautiful. As much as the coin, I equally enjoyed the conversation behind it and the delight that its owner saw in it. BCCS has a neat blend of knowledge and relationships visibly evident to those who were able to travel and attend.

Value of a Support Infrastructure and Subsequent Knowledge Delivery – How many times have you reached out to another BCCS member to get a 2nd or 3rd opinion on a coin being studied or thought of for purchase? You may or may not have, but it is awesome to think that you could if you wanted to. One question I asked a couple of attendees after the meeting was their view of the “halo” effect seen on a coin vs. more of a virtually flat-gray type of appearance. Which of these would be more interesting or visually appealing to them? The resulting tacit knowledge transfer was the best way to learn in this instance – something that could not readily be understood out of a book. Gaining this sort of understanding and support helps one to better understand what others consider “quality” Barber pieces. Without the support of community members, this would be very difficult to ascertain. It can be seen that value, of course, comes from those who receive answers to these questions. The delivery of knowledge on “what a coin should look like when it is of a higher degree of quality,” however, also benefits the one who dispenses that knowledge. The sharing of knowledge not only can be very simplistic but can help drive a deeper understanding of what is to be known for the knowledge provider... in this case, Barber coins. Insight is gained in the way the answer was received. The BCCS is a great community “hub” in which questions about Barber coins not only can be asked freely, but answered.

Value of Accessible Documentation - While at the ANA show, I purchased a copy of Kevin Flynn’s *The Authoritative Reference on Barber Quarter Dollars* book emphasizing variety notations. I already had both the original and follow-up Lawrence/Feigenbaum texts as well as a few of the BCCS *Journals*. This focus area, to me, can be more frustrating than most others – finding more recent written materials on Barber coins. Having a “Book of Knowledge” concerning Barber coins

includes reference links that can be found at the Society's website. Some of these materials tend to be a little dated. I believe an increased resurgence for collecting Barbers would happen if a new book or two found its way into publication. Books tend to bring about more interest in collecting the given series a written book talks about. The BCCS does a great job of bringing these texts, or at least making them known, via their website. As the Society continues to examine and expand its source links to these books of knowledge, the more BCCS and those who collect Barbers in general will benefit.

On a personal note, I would be interested in hearing feedback from all BCCS members concerning the aesthetics of their coins and what they see as valuable or not valuable when selecting specimens for purchase. This would help to bring myself knowledge and further enjoyment of our beloved hobby.

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All three David Lawrence Barber coin books - *The Complete Guide to Barber Dimes*, *The Complete Guide to Barber Quarters*, and *The Complete Guide to Barber Halves*, as well as *The Complete Guide to Certified Barber Coinage* by David Lawrence & John Feigenbaum - are available at the DLRC on-line library website: <http://www.stellacoinnews.com/>. Click on "Reference Books" and scroll down to the book title you want. Access is free. No membership required.

What a Racket!

By Matthew Student

All that glitters is not gold.
Often you have heard it told
Of nickels dated '83
And plated unabashedly
To pass as fivers. A practice bold.



The Liberty Head/Barber/"V" Nickels have two interesting bookends. At the beginning is the 1883 "Racketeer" Nickel, a product of Uncle Charlie's oversight - no denomination on the coin. At the end is the infamous 1913, clandestinely produced and its history quite strange.

This past July, a question was posted on the CCF (Coin Community Family) website under the topic "Real Racketeer Nickels": *Is there any way of knowing if a racketeer nickel is truly genuine?* I responded, sharing the photos shown above of my own 1883. To make a long story short, there are indications which suggest that a given example *may* be contemporary to the early 1880s, but in no way is it possible to prove this one way or another.

Many of you know the story of Josh, a deaf mute who passed them off as five dollar pieces when purchasing five cent cigars, pocketing the \$4.95 change. Doubt exists as to his actual existence. No matter. This interesting bit of Barber history is destined to endure as part of our shared passion.

http://www.coincommunity.com/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=154036

The above web address will take you to the CCF "US Coins and Currency Discussion Forum" where you can follow the discussion about the 1883 Nickel. No membership is needed as we freely share what we have to share.

BCCS Regional Update

By **John Frost**, BCCS Regional Program Director

We had a good meeting at the May New Hampshire Coin Expo, and a modest meeting at the June Whitman Baltimore Expo as this particular show is smaller and much less attended than its spring and fall shows. Still, it was good to see ten friends there. And then there was the ANA last month in Rosemont (Chicago). The new day for the meeting was a huge success. Richard Shimkus and I staffed the BCCS/LSCC (Liberty Seated Collectors Club) table on the bourse floor with some great coins and other related items on exhibit. See the separate article (page 15) on the BCCS Annual Meeting at the ANA.

As we (reluctantly!) enter the autumn season - not quite ready for summer to be over - the show schedule heats up a bit. We'll have a table at the Bay State Coin Show September 6-7 and a table at the Whitman Philadelphia Expo September 19-21, both prior to you receiving this *Journal*, but we'll also have a table at the New Hampshire Coin Expo in Manchester, NH October 4-5 where we'll have a joint meeting with the LSCC. We've done this before and have had great success with cross-pollination as both clubs typically gain new interest and even new members. See the meeting listing at the end of this article.

We also look forward to the November Whitman Baltimore Show where we will have our regular meeting on Friday, November 9 at 3:00, and a one-day table with exhibits on the bourse floor. The folks at Whitman are extremely club-friendly and offer us excellent meeting space, plus a free bourse table whenever we want. If you haven't been to a Baltimore Show, please join us. For my money, this is the best show in the East after FUN, and it is consistently enjoyable. We're still trying to decide what to do for Long Beach, and Regional Director Glenn Holsonbake will try to figure something out. Please check the website regularly for the latest news about Long Beach, as well as other shows.

If you want to help the BCCS, please help us at a Local or Regional Show. Many club shows will give collector clubs a table on the bourse floor. It is a win-win: it helps bring collectors to their shows, and it helps the clubs. There is no better way to meet other Barber enthusiasts and it is great fun -- just ask any of us who have spent time behind a table! And you can help promote the club, and introduce people to Barber coinage. Please send email to BCCS@barbercoins.org.

If you want to host a meeting at a local show, you can also check out our resources at: www.barbercoins.org/regional.html.

Hope to see you at one of our upcoming meetings!



Upcoming BCCS Regional Events

- **Whitman Philadelphia Expo**, September 19-21, Pennsylvania Convention Center. Bourse club table. Joint Meeting of the BCCS and LSCC: Friday, September 20, 9:00 a.m. in Room 309, before the bourse opens to the public. NOTE: this is different than our “normal” meeting time.
- **New Hampshire Coin Expo**, October 4-5, Manchester, Radisson Hotel Center. Bourse club table. Joint Meeting of BCCS and LSCC: Friday afternoon, October 4, exact time to be determined.
- **Whitman Baltimore Expo**, November 7-9, Baltimore (MD) Convention Center. Bourse club table on Friday, November 9 only. BCCS Meeting: Friday, November 8, 3:00 p.m.
- **Florida United Numismatists (FUN) 2014**, January 9-11, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando. BCCS Meeting: Friday, January 10, 3:00 p.m.

Please see our website for locations and exact meeting times, as these normally get confirmed closer to the show dates.

Other shows may be added to the schedule – check the website for updates. Also, emails about added shows will be sent to the BCCS Blind Email List.

BCCS members can propose and host a meeting at a local or regional show. Please submit your name, email address (so we can confirm with you), coin show (name and/or city), proposed meeting date and time, meeting location, or where or how you propose to meet the others who will attend, and any other comments you wish to make to us at bccs@BarberCoins.org.

My New York City Subway Hoard

By **Bill Rodriguez**

I guess it was sometime in the early fifties while I was a kid growing up in upper Manhattan, New York that I got hooked on coin collecting. Each week a friend named Woodie and I would scrape together whatever money we could and go to see Morris at the 207th Street Station of the IND subway line where he was a change maker.

Woodie and I would go see Morris after school and pick up the latest goodies he fished out of the thousands of coins that passed through his hands each day. Subways cost ten cents in those days so he had dimes aplenty, mostly Mercs, but a good share of Barbers, as well as an occasional Seated Liberty. One time Morris even had a nickel three cent piece with a slightly flattened rim where someone had forced it into the coin slot on the turnstile. That was a coin I kept for many years, but it escaped from me somehow. It's one I wish I still had.

We would get a couple of dollars' worth of Barber dimes at face value from Morris and run to Woodie's house, open his *Red Book* and start seeing what treasures we had picked up that day. We would sort them out by mintage and alternate taking coins until we had distributed them all. Then we would fill in the holes in our Whitman folders. Most of the coins we got were AG-G and maybe an occasional VG or even a Fine. Whatever duplicates we had we would take to school and sell them for fifteen cents making a huge fifty percent profit.

Woodie and I figured we had it made as we were filling up our Whitman folders, with Morris's help, of course. From my old *Red Book* in which I had checked off my Barber dimes, I see that I had fifty-five dates and mints. Included were 92-O, 94, 95-S, 96, 01-S, 02-S, 03-S, 04-S, 13-S and 15-S. We were on cloud nine and figured that it was just a matter of time until we filled up our folders with the rest of the dimes, including the famous 94-S. Not only that, but we had a good business going selling the duplicates at school.

Then it happened. One cold winter day when we went up to collect our latest treasures, Morris wasn't there. The agent on duty said this was *his* permanent post now. Morris had been transferred to, of all places, Brooklyn! As far as we were concerned, that was another planet. Our hopes for riches collecting Barbers and selling duplicates came to a screeching halt.

It wasn't until I read Paul Green's article in the June issue of the BCCS *Journal* that I saw that the name of one of the collectors of the "New York City Subway Hoard" was a guy named Morris Moscow who worked for the New York City Transit Authority. And now I wonder if that guy in the change booth at the 207th Street Station was the infamous Morris Moscow? I'll probably never find out, but it sure seems to fit.

It was fun putting this together. It brought back some great memories of when I was a kid growing up in New York City. Sadly, my friend Woodie died several years ago.



Barber Bits

I'm looking for the following BCCS *Journals*: Vol. II #1 and #2, Vol. IV #4, Vol V #1 and #2, Vol. XI #2 and 3, Vol. 16 #1, Vol. 18 #1, and Vol. 19 #1

Any help is greatly appreciated.

Justin Stultz <jusstul3@hotmail.com>



I have just read an article in the January, 2013 edition of *Coin World Extra* about a hub change for the 1900 Barber Dime resulting in two obverse varieties for that year. In that I have never heard of this variety before and noting that it is not in any of my reference books, I was curious if you or any other club members have seen this variety. Also, I am curious to know if it exists for all 3 mints of that year.

Any information you might have would be appreciated.

Intrigued,
Ken Seholm



Barber Barter

I have upgraded 3 of my coins and have these pieces for sale. I wanted to offer them to other collectors before I sell them to a dealer. The coins I have are:

1905-O Barber 25c in PCGS 64

1906-D Barber 25c in PCGS 63

1906-O Barber 50c in PCGS 63

David J. Wollinka, office phone (727-781-5444 c/o Edie), email
<dwollinka@wollinka.com>

BCCS “blind” Email List

The BCCS web service has the capability to send messages using a “Blind Carbon Copy” setting, which means everyone on the list gets the email, but nobody’s email address is displayed. The advantages to having such a list include the ability to post last-minute BCCS get-togethers at regional shows and other types of Society communications, if needed, without having to wait for the next issue of the Journal. It is completely voluntary, and is open to members only. If you wish to be on this list, please send an email to: BCCS@BarberCoins.org and your name will be added. Your information will not be disclosed to anyone, and you will only receive email regarding BCCS business from the BCCS email account.

BCCS Advertisement Rates

1/8 page	1 issue.....\$12	4 issues.....\$40
1/4 page	1 issue.....\$20	4 issues.....\$70
1/2 page	1 issue.....\$30	4 issues.....\$100
1 page	1 issue.....\$70	4 issues.....\$250

1 page inside front - rear cover	1 issue..\$80	4 issues.....\$300
1 page outside rear cover	1 issue...\$125	4 issues.....\$400

BCCS Annual Meeting at ANA Summary

By **John Frost**, BCCS Regional Program Director

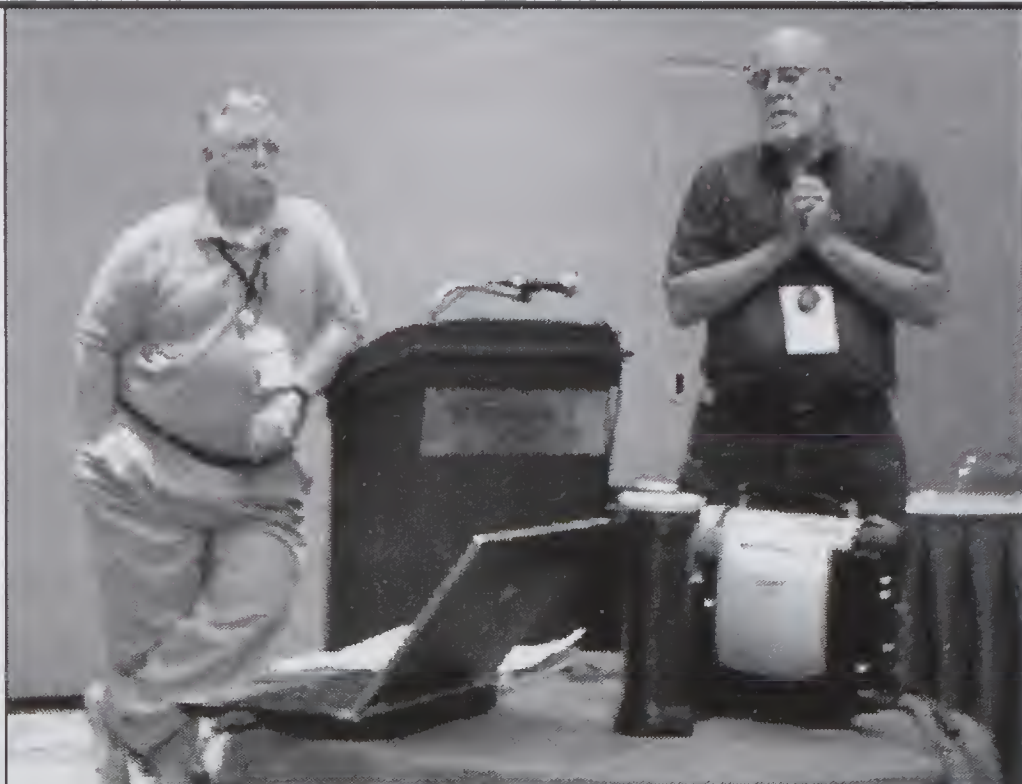
This was the first year that we changed our meeting day from the traditional Saturday morning. When the ANA ran from Wednesday to Sunday, a Saturday meeting made sense. This year, the ANA began a Monday to Saturday schedule, and we felt that having a meeting on the last day of a 6-day show would mean most BCCS attendees to the show would not still be at the ANA by then, so we decided to move the meeting to earlier in the week.

It would seem our selection of Wednesday at 9:00 was an exceptional choice, as we had 23 attendees, which is the largest meeting I can ever remember at the ANA. Many attendees had to leave before the group photo was taken (see front cover) or declined to be in the photo, but it was a great gathering!

After introductions, a brief presentation was made on the status and success of the Regional Program, with BCCS membership up 27% in just two years, an astounding performance considering many organizations are experiencing declining membership. Special thanks was paid to our Regional Directors who worked hard this past year hosting shows and/or meetings. Directors in attendance included Glenn Holsonbake (West) and Vern Sebby and Richard Shimkus (Midwest).

The **Varieties Survey for Barber Halves** was the next topic, as the club voiced enthusiasm for continuing the series we began with the Quarters last year. Members Mike Hayes and Glenn Holsonbake volunteered to head the Committee, with assistance from Dave Earp, who was invaluable in the Quarters Varieties Survey. If you are interested in helping, please send us an email at BCCS@barber-coins.org and we'll put you in touch with the committee. The Survey is planned for the first half of 2014.

Speaking of Glenn and Mike, they presented to the BCCS Meeting their experience at the ANA Summer Seminar Series, where they both presented a class on "The Coins of Charles Barber." They described the intense and extraordinary week that saw enthusiasm and lots of give-and-take by collectors, both new as well as long-time experienced collectors. Topics included nuances in grading the different series and hubs, rarity, varieties, authentication/counterfeits, and collecting. They both hope to offer this class again in the future.



Glenn and Mike discussing the ANA Summer Seminar Series

The next discussion topic was the marking of the 25th Anniversary of the Barber Coin Collectors Society next year in 2014. In addition to planning a special look for the website, we discussed the possibility of a commemorative medal to mark the occasion. Some potential mock-ups were offered just to get ideas going, as well as a discussion of estimated production costs and pricing options. A number of members offered up excellent ideas. The most likely target is a 1-ounce .999 silver medal, but other ideas are being considered.



A committee is being formed, headed by Glenn (again!), and the feasibility of such a medal will be examined, possibly involving the polling of the membership to see if there is enough support for this project. Creativity in a design is also encouraged – think out of the box!

Depending on the approach we take, it may take 80-90 medals sold to break even, unless we obtain some sponsorship (one member had a viable idea about that, too). So stay tuned. Feedback via the website/email is welcomed!

Finally, we ended the meeting with some brief “show and tell,” and then everyone adjourned to the bourse floor. On Friday, we had a table on the bourse floor for the day. If you are at the ANA next year, also in Chicago, we plan to repeat the club table. Please stop by!



The material presented at the meeting is available on the BCCS website.

THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Your article submission(s) automatically enters you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50. Second place prize will be \$25 and third place will be a free one year BCCS membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date and get your article to Eileen at the post office or e-mail address on page 3.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS Nov. 25th

Barber Dime in the News

Legend Numismatics has purchased an 1894-S Barber Dime from DLRC President John Feigenbaum for more than two million dollars. Known as the Daggett specimen, it is graded PR64+ by PCGS.

Twenty-four proof dimes were minted in San Francisco in 1894, only ten of which are known to exist today. Of the many theories as to why they were minted, the most widely accepted one is that San Francisco Mint Superintendent John Daggett had them made to impress several visiting VIPs.

Shown on the Aug. 6, 2013 cover of *Numismatic News*, the accompanying text explains “No one knows why he picked the dime, except that he needed to balance a \$2.40 deficit in the Mint ledger.”

Editor's note: Gary's original article appeared in the May 2013 issue of *Silver and Gold* published by Western and Eastern Treasures Magazine. I have not seen it. I edited the article Gary sent with emphasis on the 1904 Barber Half he found.

The Find of my Lifetime

By **Gary Waddell**

Metal detecting began for me in 1990 when I purchased my first machine, a Fisher CZ6. Going to local ball fields and parks, I found many coins, some jewelry, even artifacts, but, with it being an analog machine, I found more than my share of pull tabs and junk!

After some time, I started working with someone who had been detecting since the 80's with a White's machine. He was good with that older machine and always seemed to find old coins. He took me to what had been an amusement park that was razed a very long time ago and is now just an open field. It was amazing to look around and realize that about 50+ years ago there was a full amusement park there with roller coasters, carousel, ball fields, swimming pool, dance hall, race track, and more!

The park had been built at the turn of the century at the terminus of the local trolley company to promote ridership. They had wild west shows there and I have been told that Buffalo Bill had even performed there with his troupe. Maybe that explains all the old shotgun shell brass that would be found during my coin hunting. It was during this time that my interest in detecting waned a bit and I eventually stopped completely. All I seemed to find was shot gun shells, nails, pull tabs and junk.

Some time later I made the acquaintance of another metal detecting enthusiast who got me to join a detecting club which got me interested in the hobby once again. I purchased a new detector, a Fisher CZ70 Pro. It was a good improvement, let me tell you! Hunting resumed with the club functions and good finds started to come my way.

I still belong to that club, and since then a group of fellow detectors and I have started our own local metal detecting club in the county we live in. I have since purchased my newest detector, a Garrett ATPro, which is the best detector I have yet to own. I have returned to my old hunting sites with it and have proven to myself and the club members that old hunting areas are never hunted out!

In April of 2012, while hunting the amusement park, I found myself digging up more shotgun shells, but I also found Buffalo nickels, V-nickels, and Indian Head pennies. A few Mercury dimes were found also, but, unfortunately, no Barber dimes.

One fine spring day, near the end of the month, I heard a faint signal on the ATPro registering first 53 and then 93~98, bouncing back and forth, depending on the position over which I swept the target with the coil. The depth was 6"-8." Knowing the depth usually means you are looking at finding something old. I decided I had another shotgun shell or, at worst, an old rusty nail or washer which are typical of the old amusement park.

I proceeded to cut a large plug from the ground, approximately 8" around and 4" in depth, just in case it was a coin. After removing the plug, I used my Garrett ProPointer to spot the target. According to the beeps from my pointer, it was off to one side of the hole and deeper still.

Carefully removing still more soil and pinpointing until I had a constant signal, I then removed the last bit of soil to uncover the edge of a coin, a shiny silver coin! It was a Barber half dollar!!! After sitting there looking at it for a minute or so, wondering if I *was* seeing what I thought I was seeing, I used my cell phone to photograph the coin.

At first I couldn't see the date, but I was excited nonetheless just to see the beautiful sight of the shining silver! After taking several pictures, I noticed the coin was at a slight angle in the earth which probably explained the signal bouncing from 53 to 98. Carefully, I pried the coin from the mud. The mud broke off revealing the beautiful face of Miss Liberty and the date, 1904. My heart was pounding holding that beautiful coin by its edge, staring at the first Barber half dollar I had ever found!

I could see that it was in pretty good condition and I breathed a sigh of relief. It had not been damaged by my recovery or from former use. I turned the coin over and saw the 'S' mint mark and the wonderful eagle with spread wings. As it lay in my hand, I took even more pictures of my new find, then carefully wrapped it in my glove and put it in my shirt pocket. After rechecking the hole with my detector, I replaced the dirt and plug and went straight home.

During the short drive home I kept thinking about how far my detecting skills had advanced over the last 22 years: from starting out finding only clad coins using too much discrimination to eventually running in the pro-zero mode on my ATPro. I had learned, finally, that not all desirable targets read out as good signals,

especially in high trash areas and tough soil conditions.

My favorite old park had started to yield coins and a few artifacts again by running low discrimination. Hence my growing collection of shotgun shell brass, rifle shell brass, and pistol shell brass. The shells were of all gauges, from 20 to 10 with the bulk being 12 gauge, and the rifle shells were the 30.06 and also 45/70. The pistol shells were anywhere from 32 to 45 caliber. Looking back at the history of the park ground, I learned that the park was also used as a training area for the local military units pre-WWI and later. That explained to me the 45/70 shell casings and 30.06.

I have found Buffalo and V-nickels in the same signal range as the shotgun shell and rifle casings. I also learned that a corroded Indian Head penny can read low on the scale too, so I have surmised that if I don't dig those low and broken signals, I may pass up the best finds! This I felt was why I was able to find my "coin-of-a-lifetime" that had been laying in that park for over 100 years.

Upon arriving home, I ran water over the coin to remove any loose mud, being careful not to rub it. It was then that I could see it was hardly worn at all! It did have some corrosion on the reverse side, but generally it was in great shape. It was a 1904S Barber Half.

I did not know what I had until I looked it up in my *Red Book*. It was then that I got one big surprise and even started to shake a little because of the value the book stated. I showed it to my wife who always kids me about finding the "big one" and then I showed her the book value. She smiled. I realized that maybe I really *had* found my "big one" because the book value was high, especially for the upper grades of this coin. As it turns out, it was low mintage and is scarce in XF to AU grades.

I took the coin to my local dealer to find out at what value he appraised it. He told me he could clean up the remaining mud and corrosion for me. I gave it to him and he ran it through his steam cleaner. It did a pretty good job removing the mud, but a coating of corrosion remained on the outer edge of the reverse side that I felt should be removed.

I know that everyone says not to clean a valuable old coin, but I wanted the coin to show its full beautiful potential! The coin had been in the ground for about 100 years and there was no natural patina on it from being in circulation. This was the main reason I felt the corrosion should come off.

Showing the coin to the dealer and pointing out the corrosion, I asked him

if it could be removed. Using an ultrasound machine, he removed the corrosion with the exception of one small speck that you have to look at closely for it to be seen.

I then took the cleaned coin to a local coin show and, showing it to several dealers, I had all types of offers for it – very low to quite high. But since I didn't intend to lose possession of my greatest find, the offers really didn't matter. I wanted to get it slabbed and graded quickly so I could enter it in my detecting club's "find-of-the-year" contest, but the grading company that was on-site had already left for the day.

Eventually I found another dealer who told me I had a rare coin and to send it to SEGS, or Sovereign Entity Grading. He told me that SEGS would slab and grade it for me within one week. True to his word, it came back quickly, graded AU50 Details Cleaned, which was a higher grade than I had expected.

After entering my coin in the club contest, it did win "Find-of-the-Year," but it's probably the "Find-of-my-Lifetime!"



Barber Coin Collectors' Society

1. Promotes the writing and sharing of information on Barber coins to an organization of individuals who are interested in increasing their knowledge of the series; for Society purposes, Barber coins are defined as primarily U.S. dimes, quarters and half dollars designed by Charles E. Barber, and minted from 1892 to 1916.
2. Gives Barber hobbyists an opportunity to contact other collectors with similar numismatic interests.
3. Can promote consistent grading standards among collectors, dealers, society members and non-members alike.
4. Through group purchasing power, can offer its members discounts on numismatic materials relating especially to the collecting of Barber coins.
5. Provides members a means to trade their Barbers with other members, in an effort to upgrade or complete their collection.
6. Effectively lobbies numismatic shows and events to provide Barber exhibits and space for all Barber dealers to sell their merchandise.
7. Promotes the collecting of Barbers and the hobby in general to today's youngsters.
8. Offers benefit to all Barber collectors, whether they collect Barber dimes, quarters or halves, graded AG or MS65+.
9. Makes sure its members have a say in the organization.
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This example was minted with great care, the planchet polished to a highly mirrored finish, and the dies showing some evidence of polishing or special preparation. The nearly perfect strike shows only a few minor weaknesses – virtually identical to the Eliasberg coin. Certified as a Specimen by NGC, there is ample evidence to suggest striking for a special purpose, probably as a branch mint proof.

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